



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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26 January 2009

### NPL103010.E

Nepal: Prevalence of forged, fake or falsely acquired documents, including identity documents, professional certifications, membership cards and employment records  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In 26 November 2008 correspondence, an official at the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi who deals primarily with identity documents from India as well as Nepal stated the following:

My experience is that any Nepalese document can be obtained by fraud. These may include falsely obtained, forged or complete counterfeits. I have personally seen and seized counterfeit passports, driver's licences and company identification cards that are complete counterfeits or are altered. (Canada 26 Nov. 2008)

In further correspondence, the Official also stated that "by obtaining the fraudulent documents [Nepalese] can then travel to other countries in the region, quite easily, and then obtain further counterfeit documentation for travel to their [desired] final destination" (Canada 28 Nov. 2008). When asked about the verification of fraudulent documents, the Official stated that it is "easy and reliable to verify travel documents through the Nepalese embassy"; however, the Official noted that the verification of birth records and school certificates is more difficult (ibid.).

The Official stated that it is difficult to assess the number of documents that are falsely acquired through government channels and the number of documents that are complete counterfeits (ibid.). However, several local news articles have reported on the illegal distribution of identity documents by government employees (Nepal News 28 Jan. 2006; EKantipur 11 June 2007; *The Kathmandu Post* 15 June 2008; ibid. 6 Aug. 2008). A Nepal News article states that the Commission for Investigations of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), a constitutional body based in Kathmandu that conducts inquiries into public office corruption (Nepal n.d.), registered 540 corruption cases in the past three years, finalizing 339 of them (Nepal News 28 Jan. 2006). The spokesperson of the CIAA, Laxman Kumar Pokharel, reportedly stated that "'the charges against public office holders include amassing property through illegal means, fiscal crime, fake certificates, and other corrupt activities like abuse of passports, vehicle registration and bribery,'" and "involve ministers, secretaries, police inspector generals and other high ranking government officials" (ibid.). Additionally, the article states that 233 people, of various rank, entered the public service with fake certificates (ibid.).

A 6 August 2008 article in *The Kathmandu Post* states that the CIAA began investigations at the Bagmati Zonal Transportation Management Office in regard to irregular driver's licence distribution involving police, doctors and officials. The CIAA offered the transportation office suggestions on how to reduce the misuse of authority, including the development of computer networking to systematize records of licence distribution and revenue, as well as law enforcement to inhibit the use of fake documents (*The Kathmandu Post* 6 Aug. 2008). *The Kathmandu Post* also published a 15 June 2008 article stating that the District Administrative Office (DAO) in Bardiya [Western Nepal] is investigating the distribution of 18 citizenship certificates to non-Nepalese citizens. The citizenship certificates were distributed by government mobile teams and were reportedly issued to applicants who provided fake documents (*The Kathmandu Post* 15 June 2008). In 2007, EKantipur.com published an article regarding the DAO in Myagdi [Western Nepal] and the issuance of two citizenship certificates for one person for a bribe (11 June 2007). According to the article, government employees at the DAO were pressured to take bribes by the vice-president of the District Development Committee (DDC) (EKantipur.com 11 June 2007).

Several *Kathmandu Post* articles address the acquisition or use of forged and fake documents in Nepal by private citizens (*The Kathmandu Post* 7 July 2008; *ibid.* 29 June 2008; *ibid.* 6 Nov. 2008). According to one article, the Metropolitan Police Crime Division (MPCD) arrested two individuals for forgery and embezzlement who had allegedly defrauded people with "forged American visas, fake job offers and illegal documents" (*The Kathmandu Post* 29 June 2008). Shortly after, *The Kathmandu Post* published an article reporting that the Department of Immigration issued a statement warning foreign-job seekers that some employment agencies have attempted to send citizens abroad with fraudulent documentation (7 July 2008). The article further states that travelling with false documents is punishable by a fine of up to 50,000 Nepalese rupees [1.00 rupee = 0.02 Canadian dollars (XE.com 6 Jan. 2009)] or five years imprisonment or both (*The Kathmandu Post* 7 July 2008). Additionally, a 6 November 2008 *Kathmandu Post* article states that the MPCD arrested seven members of a criminal group who extorted over 1,500,000 rupees from 33 businessmen and financial institutions. The article reports that businessmen were forced to make deposits into fake bank accounts that were created using fake identity cards (*The Kathmandu Post* 6 Nov. 2008).

Specific information on forged, fake or falsely acquired professional certifications, membership cards and employment records could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

#### References

Canada. 26 November 2008. Canadian High Commission, New Delhi. Correspondence from an official.

EKantipur. 11 June 2007. Ghanshyam Khadka. "Officials Admit Taking Bribe for Citizenship." <<http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?nid=112349>> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2008]

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Nepal News. 28 January 2006. "540 Corruption Cases Filed in Three Years: CIAA." <<http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2006/jan/jan28/news02.php>> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2008]

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#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** Attempts to reach a representative at Transparency International Nepal were unsuccessful.

**Internet sites, including:** Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Economist Intelligence Unit, The Fund for Peace, Gallup World Poll, Global Insight, Global Integrity, *The Hindu* [Chennai, India], Nepal Police, The Political Risk Services (PRS) Group, United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council, United States (US) Department of State, World Bank Institute.

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